

Healthy TOGETHER

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Provided as a benefit
to Oregon Health Plan
Care Coordination
Program clients

1-800-562-4620
www.OHPCC.org



Look Out for Lead

If you live in an older house or apartment, you might have a big problem on your hands: lead.

Lead is highly toxic. Lead poisoning can cause coma and death. It is especially dangerous to young children and infants. Even low levels can affect how a child's brain and nervous system develops. This can cause learning disabilities, lower IQ and behavior problems.

Sadly, lead poisoning is very common. It often affects kids growing up in lower-income neighborhoods, where there are many older homes. In many neighborhoods, more than half of all young children have lead

poisoning. The scariest part about lead poisoning is that it causes no clear symptoms. So often, parents do not know and do not seek treatment for kids.

Sources of lead

Lead paint is banned today, but most houses built before 1978 used it. When paint in older homes begins to peel, it leaves contaminated paint chips and dust. Young children can eat paint chips or put something in their mouths that touched lead-contaminated dust.

Lead can also be found in:

- Soil around a home

- Older furniture
- Toys and play jewelry
- Candy imported from Mexico
- Drinking water from contaminated plumbing
- Vinyl blinds made in China, Taiwan, Mexico or Indonesia

Prevent poisoning

If you live in a home that was built before 1978:

- Keep kids away from peeling paint.
- Wash your child's hands and toys often.
- Wash floors, window sills and other flat surfaces every 2 to 3 weeks.
- Do not let kids play in bare soil.
- Use only cold water to prepare food and drinks. If it needs to be hot, heat it in the microwave or on the stove.

Protect your home and family

If you think your family is at risk, find out. Download a lead poisoning home checklist at epa.gov/lead/pubs/chancechecklist.pdf.



**24/7 Nurse
Advice Line**
1-800-562-4620

Call ANYTIME you want
to talk to a nurse.

Rid Your Home of Asthma Triggers

Your home should be your haven. Yet it could harbor unwanted asthma triggers that can make your asthma worse. Here is a guide to some common asthma triggers in the home—and how to avoid them.

Household chemicals, such as air fresheners, cleaning products, cosmetics, paints and pesticides

- Try to avoid these products.
- Buy all-natural products made from plant sources.
- Use household staples like vinegar and baking soda for cleaning.

Indoor Molds

- Fix any leaks as soon as you find them. Dry the area completely.
- Hire a professional for large cleanups (more than 10 square feet).
- Run exhaust fans in the bathroom and kitchen. If you do not have a fan, open a window while showering, cooking and washing dishes.
- Scrub mold from hard surfaces with water and detergent. Dry well.
- Wear protective gear when cleaning mold. Use rubber gloves, goggles and an N-95 respirator mask. The masks are sold at many hardware stores.

Dust and Dust Mites

- Replace carpet with wood or tile flooring, if possible.
- Enclose mattresses, box springs and pillows in allergen-proof fabric covers or airtight plastic covers.
- Wash bedding once a week in hot water (130 degrees). Dry in a hot dryer.

- Wipe down surfaces regularly with a damp cloth.
- Vacuum carpets and upholstered furniture weekly.
- Choose a vacuum cleaner with a HEPA (high-efficiency particulate air) filter.

Pets

- Ban indoor pets from your bedroom. Do not allow them on the furniture. If possible, limit pets to uncarpeted areas of your home.
- Have someone else clean the cage, if you have a hamster or other caged pet.
- Keep pets outdoors as much as possible.

Cockroaches

- Clean inside cabinets and under the refrigerator and stove often.
- Fix wall cracks, unsealed windows and other openings where pests may enter your home.
- Put away pet food dishes as soon as your pet finishes eating.
- Repair cracks and gaps around kitchen cabinets.
- Store food in airtight containers and cleaning up dirty dishes, food spills and crumbs right away.
- Use a lidded garbage can and make sure trash and recyclables do not pile up.



Take Control: Get Help for Drug or Alcohol Abuse

Do you or someone you know have an alcohol or drug abuse problem? It is not always easy to tell. Substance abuse, the harmful use of alcohol or drugs, is a serious issue.

You could have a problem if you have any of these signs:

- **Cravings:** You have a strong urge to use drugs or alcohol.
- **Lack of control:** You cannot stop using drugs or alcohol even if you want to.
- **Dependence:** You have withdrawal symptoms such as nausea, bad moods, headaches or anxiety when you stop.
- **Tolerance:** It takes more and more drugs or alcohol to make you feel the same effect.

The Toll It Takes

It can be hard to admit that you have a problem. Take a closer look at how drugs or alcohol may be affecting your life. Does using drugs or alcohol take up a lot of your time and thoughts? Do

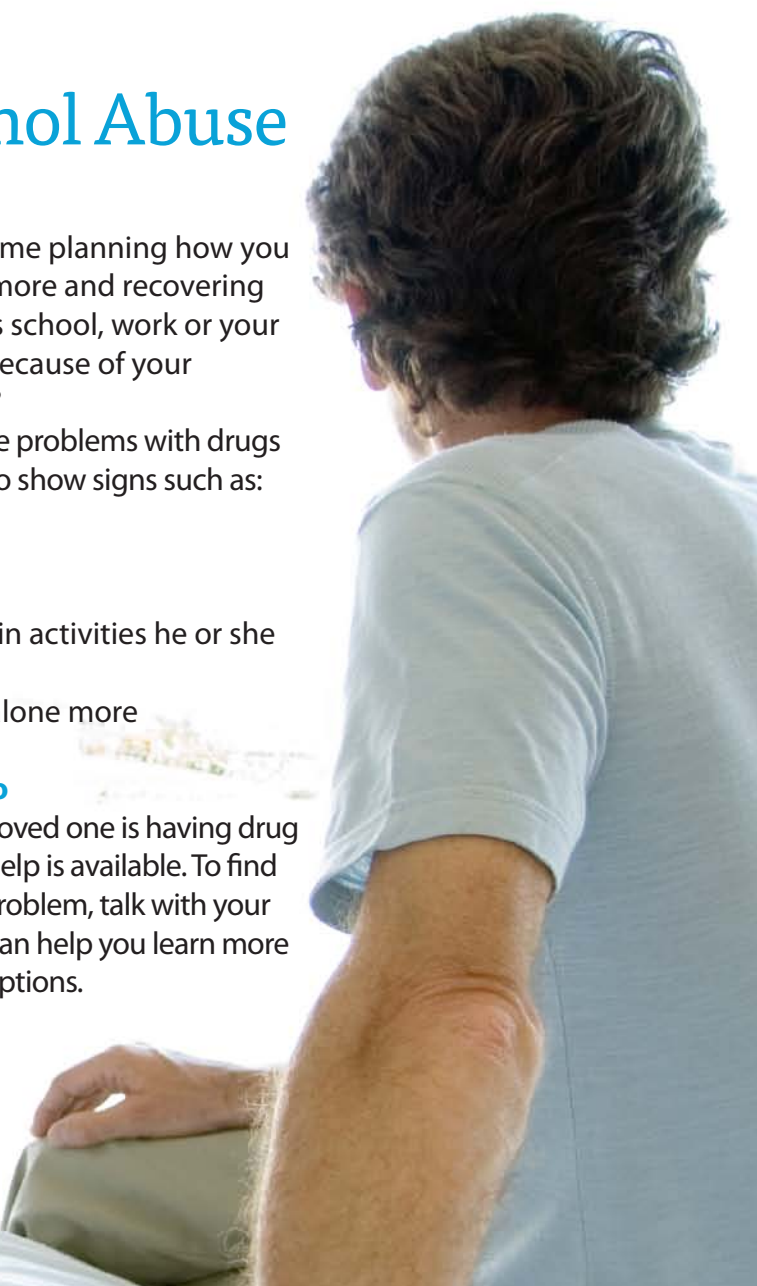
you spend your time planning how you are going to get more and recovering from its effects? Is school, work or your family suffering because of your substance abuse?

People who have problems with drugs or alcohol may also show signs such as:

- Violence
- Confusion
- Bloodshot eyes
- Loss of interest in activities he or she used to do
- Wanting to be alone more

What You Can Do

Whether you or a loved one is having drug or alcohol issues, help is available. To find out if you have a problem, talk with your doctor. He or she can help you learn more about treatment options.



Feeling “Blue” vs. Depression

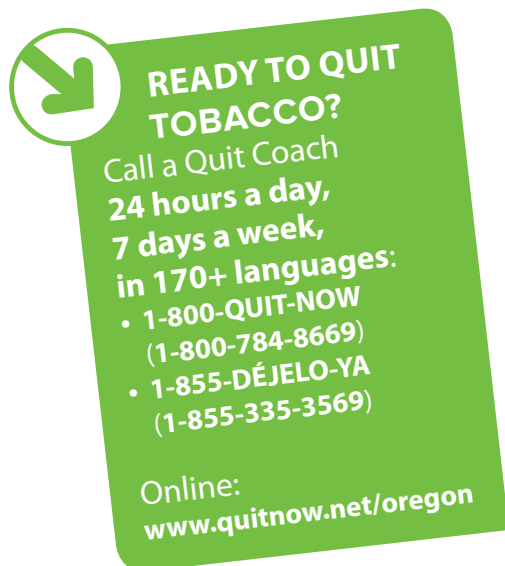
It is normal to feel down for a few days. But if these feelings last for 2 weeks or longer and affect your everyday life, you may have depression.

DEPRESSION SYMPTOMS

- Crying easily
- Fatigue or loss of energy
- Feeling irritable, anxious, easily annoyed or restless
- Feeling worthless, sad, hopeless, numb or empty

- Having a hard time making decisions, concentrating, remembering things and paying attention
- Having a hard time sleeping, or sleeping too much
- Lack of interest in things you used to enjoy
- Thoughts of harming yourself
- Unexplained changes in weight or appetite

If any of these symptoms describe you, talk with your doctor.



Call **1-800-562-4620** to discuss any of the topics in this newsletter or any other health issues. Visit our Web site at **www.OHPCC.org**.

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Make the Most of Well-Child Visits

A doctor's office is not just a place to go when your child is sick or injured. It is just as important to see the doctor when your child is feeling well. Regular checkups, also known as well visits, help make sure your child is healthy and growing like he or she should be. Your child may also get vaccines and screenings during these visits.

Here are some ways to make the most of your visits:

- **See the same doctor.** This gives you a chance to get to know your child's doctor, and for your child's doctor to get to know your child.
- **Make a list.** Before your child's appointment, write down any questions you have. Bring the list with you. Also bring a list of medicines your child takes.
- **Think beyond health.** Feel free to talk with the doctor about anything related to your child's development or behavior. This might include sleeping, eating, potty training, social skills and more. Of course, you can also ask health questions.
- **Ask others.** Talk to anyone who takes care of your child, such as a grandparent or caregiver at daycare. They may notice something about your child you have not seen before that you may want to talk about with the doctor.

